

**Committee for a Better Environment
Davis Hall, College Park
February 23, 2015
7:00 PM**

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Phil Aronson	X	
Suchitra Balachandran	X	
Matt Dernoga	X	
Gemma Evans	X	
Janis Oppelt	X	
Kennis Termini		X
Donna Weene		X

Guests Present: Steve Beavers, City Liaison; Mayor Andrew Fellows; Councilmember Alan Hew; Kristin Brown, Waste Zero; Sheryl DeWalt, Contract Secretary

Ms. Evans called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Review and approval 1/26/15 meeting minutes

A few minor changes were made to the January 26, 2015 minutes: The verbiage about meeting with the new School Board superintendent was eliminated and the canning project will be 12 people at the Old Parish House. Ms. Oppelt made a motion to approve the draft minutes with the changes for the January 26, 2015 meeting. Ms. Balachandran seconded the motion. All in favor.

2. Budget

The current budget shows a balance of \$5526. No expenditures have been put forth for payment.

3. Ongoing Business

a. Canning & Preserving

A reminder that there will be 12 people at the Old Parish House on March 21, 2015, from 8:30am-12:30pm, canning and preserving orange marmalade. The Committee had approved at the December 8, 2014, meeting, \$250 to cover stipend, supplies and snacks for this event.

b. Birding Workshop

Ms. Oppelt has a new speaker for the Birding Workshop on March 14, 2015. She will send out an email with all of the information as well as put it on the committee website. Ms. Oppelt made a motion for \$100 for the speaker and \$50 for refreshments. Ms. Evans seconded

the motion. After a brief discussion regarding the monies for speaker fee, a vote was taken. Ms. Balachandran and Mr. Dernoga voted in favor of the motion; Mr. Aronson voted against the motion. The motion passes 4-1 for a budget of \$150 for the Birding Workshop.

c. Recycling

The Business Recycling meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2015 where grant applications will be reviewed.

d. Commemorative plaque. The Tree and Landscape Board is asking for CBE to help pay for a commemorative plaque and/or rock in memory of Dr. Amelia Murdoch who died on January 16. She was the driving force behind the Veterans Memorial, the National Language Museum, and one time chair of the CBE. They would like to place the plaque on a bench and have a dedication as part of the Arbor Day, April 25. The committee is amenable to the idea of honoring Dr. Murdoch. Ms. Evans will work with the Tree and Landscape Board, who meets on Wednesday, February 25, 2015. Mayor Fellows remarked that he thinks the plaque is a wonderful gesture in Dr. Murdoch's memory.

e. Green Awards. At the January meeting, Ms. Evans is suggested we do the Green Awards around Earth Day. Councilmember Hew asked if the Green Awards could be a part of College Park Day, which is in the fall. The committee liked the idea of presenting at College Park Day.

f. Movie nights. Movies will be shown on February 27 and March 27 at Council Chambers.

4. New Business

a. Waste Zero. Kristin Brown from Waste Zero discussed the "Pay as You Throw" program and answered questions from the committee members.

- i. Are there other college towns participating in this program? Yes, quite a number; to name a few: Worcester, Amherst, Dartmouth – does very well in Massachusetts.
- ii. How did they share it with the students? There were public meetings, positive PR flyers and promotions before, during and after the program started. Graphs on website and in newspaper showing reduction of waste. Some towns did a contest for the students getting them involved in the program. (Considerable discussion about the students living in town vs the students living on campus and participating in the program.)
- iii. We understand Aberdeen, Maryland has the program. How long have they had it? 17 years. Ms. Brown said she has a YouTube link that she can share that Aberdeen did on this program.
- iv. What obstacles might the City of College Park face? How do you explain to the public about the cost of paying for bags when trash pickup is part of paid taxes? Positive PR on the program. Show how much will not be going into the landfill by using graphs, posting on website, having public meetings, go to neighborhood meetings,

promote the environment. Most towns show a 44% decrease of waste to the landfills.

- v. What about the diverse population – how was that handled? Flyers were done in many different languages.
- vi. What will happen to all the monies that are returned for the additional amount of recycling? It needs to be made transparent in the budget and show what other projects the savings are going towards. Mayor Fellows stated that this would be a budget discussion for FY '17 and he hopes that the CBE will be able to give recommendations and suggestions to City Council.
- vii. Where will the bags be sold? In any type of store – grocery, Home Depot, Lowes...

Ms. Brown stated that she is available for any further follow-up.

- b. UMD Solid Waste Capstone Project.** Students from this university will collaborate with faculty and government officials to improve the City of College Park sustainability efforts. The College Park City Council approved \$15,000 funding for three classes, one of which is a study of the city's waste management practices which is looking to establish a three-year zero waste plan.

5. Next meeting date

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Monday, March 23, 2014 at 7:00pm.

A motion was made by Ms. Oppelt to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Ms. Evans. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Sheryl DeWalt, Contract Secretary